

American Century Championship

Saturday, July 13, 2024

Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA

Edgewood Tahoe

Mark Mulder

Joe Pavelski

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We have a couple of our leaders up front. Guys, it's probably good that you're sitting down because when you hear what Mardy Fish shot, this has been crazy out there what he's doing. He scored 34 points today, 34 points today.

MARK MULDER: He's a bully. (Laughter) It's not cool. We're all trying to catch him and he's running away from us. (Laughter).

THE MODERATOR: You guys played pretty good rounds today, both of you. Joe, I've got you at 50 points so far for the tournament. 29 today. Following up a pretty good round yesterday at 21, seven birdies today and one bogey. That's playing some pretty good golf.

JOE PAVELSKI: Seven birdies, three bogeys, I think, something like that. Who's counting, I guess. You're trying to stay connected to Mardy. We can kind of hear what's going on back there. Sounds like he was making putts from all over the green at distance, hitting good shots. That's what he does. He was on one of those here today.

You saw it a few years back when he did that. Your thought, when you're trying to chase it down, you're trying to stay connected. I thought I did a good job of that today, make some birdies, and all of a sudden he's climbed up there.

We'll have to get lucky tomorrow, hit some good shots, try to keep doing what you're doing and throw another good round at him, see what happens.

THE MODERATOR: You started off with birdieing three of the first four holes today; that's pretty solid.

JOE PAVELSKI: Felt good. Then Mardy went six on the back. And you realize you can be better.

MARK MULDER: All of a sudden that didn't matter.

THE MODERATOR: Mark, oh, hum, five birdies, not bad either. After 23 points Friday, you got another 19 today. So at 42. How are you feeling about your round?

MARK MULDER: I mean, it was fine. It was me, him and Smoltz, and we're just trying to get some momentum. We got off to a good start. We all birdied 3. We all birdied 4.

So you're trying to get something going. And every time I felt like -- because obviously I'm trying to get ahead of him. That's really what I'm trying to do. And every time I made one, then he made it right on top of me. And then you hear a roar behind us.

You're not really sure what's happening with Mardy or D Lowe or whoever is behind us and you're not trying to pay attention to it, but you're just trying to worry about your game. But he kept making great putts today.

It was fun to watch. We had a really fun group with Smoltz in it. And we made a lot of birdies. We had a handful of bogeys, and I made a double that cost me. But for the most part we had a great time.

THE MODERATOR: We talked a little bit earlier. You had a streak where you had three in a row, obviously, and you won out here. And you became the next Rick Rhoden at the time. Is Mardy Fish becoming the next Rick Rhoden, do you think?

MARK MULDER: Yeah, of course. I've said this for a while. I don't think any of us hit it as good as Mardy does. He really does strike the ball better than any of us that are out here. It just depends how he putts.

And when we had the lightning delay, we were up on 16, and D Lowe walks up and goes, "Don't worry, Mardy has made 250 feet of putt today." So when that happens, we're in trouble. I mean, we really are. There's no way around it. If he's putting the way he's capable, I don't know, it's hard, I think, for any of us to beat him because of the way he strikes the ball.

So, I don't know, tomorrow -- obviously he's going to be in the final group with him. So at least he can look him in the eyes and give him his best shot. I was just trying to do my best to get in that final group.

Doesn't look like I got there. But that's all I really wanted.

THE MODERATOR: Joe, any thoughts if you see Mardy tonight to try to rough him up a little bit or what? (Laughter).

JOE PAVELSKI: We had that little rain delay. You see a few of the friends and family that are walking around, and they're telling us Mardy just made a 50-footer on 15, or 14, whatever it was, and then you hear another roar.

I was happy how, after that break, come out and birdie 16 and 18, coming in, hit some good shots never know how it might end up. Sounded like he went 3-for-3 instead of 2-for-3.

MARK MULDER: I'm only a few doors from Mardy, I'll see what I can do tonight, at the hotel. I'll get a sound machine; I'll figure something out later.

Q. You guys mentioned the rain delay. What were you thinking about during that time? How were you keeping focused during that delay? What were you doing?

JOE PAVELSKI: There wasn't much focus going on then, to be honest. It's so much fun out here. Like the golf course is amazing, everything is first-class, but the people, when you're around them, it's fun.

You get that and there's little chirps here like, where's the lightning, we want to play, sort of thing. But obviously safety first.

They run a first-class event here and that's protocol. So it was good. Everyone smiles, all having fun. But, yeah, there wasn't a lot of seriousness going on.

MARK MULDER: We knew there was lightning but we were joking that we needed more sunscreen.

I think for most of us we were just worried about our bodies trying to be able to move after that break because we went over by the maintenance area and sat down with a lot of those guys, and pretty sure we all got stiff.

I put my arms in the air when I actually hit the fairway on 16. After that break, I was pretty pleased with the tee shot that I hit.

Q. With the big lead that Mardy has, do you think tomorrow are you guys more relaxed? Are you thinking I just have to play lights out, or are you going to be grinding like you would normally if it was a lot tighter, or just the hell with it, I'll play the best I can?

JOE PAVELSKI: A little bit of both, I think. There's going to be a time where you're going to have to make a move, for sure. But at the same time you might need him to fall back to you, and a good start goes a long way. It can tighten up quick with the point system.

If you get off to a start like today, you can grab a couple and now you're neck and neck there and close, anything can happen. But you're going to have to play solid, that's for sure. He's not going to beat himself out there, and you just go hit the shots.

MARK MULDER: I think I'm 15 points back. So that's a whole lot of high fiving I need for him to see with me and my son up in front of him.

But the reality is the more he sees -- I mean, being at the group in front, the more he sees birdie putts rolling in, the harder it becomes. It's not what we do for a living. So just the more stress you can try to put on somebody, the better start you can get off to. That's all you're trying to do. There's no secret to it. It's just try to do what you can.

I'm not playing for third or fourth or anything, I'm going to try to go make as many birdies or eagles as I can tomorrow, that's it.

Q. You both had a great second round today, better than your second round in a number of years and better than your first round yesterday. What was the big difference?

JOE PAVELSKI: I would say for me it was like I hit the ball just as well as I hit it yesterday. I hit it really good yesterday and had many of the same looks and today I made a few putts and was able to stack them on top of one another. I just felt confident out there.

But definitely some putts went in early, which was nice to see. Figured they would because I felt I hit a few good putts, didn't pick right lines or the speed was off a little bit. But today they went in a little bit.

MARK MULDER: I made a couple of bogeys on par-5s yesterday. So playing the par-5s is big in this event. You need to make birdie on all the par-5s, and I think I got three or four. That was nice.

I hit it better today than I did yesterday, but just not

enough. You need a lot of those putts to go in. Those points, you've got to stack those things on top of each other, and I just wasn't able to do that today.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

